

Message Text

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TAGS: OREP (SIMON, PAUL)

SUBJECT: CODEL SIMON WRAPUP

SUMMARY: CONGRESSMAN PAUL SIMON CONCLUDED TODAY A VISIT WHICH, IN EMBASSY'S OPINION, WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL AND HIGHLY USEFUL. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CONGRESSMAN SUBMITTED TO A SCHEDULE WHOSE PACE COMMENDED AT A GALLOP--AND STAYED THERE. IN THE BRIEF PERIOD OF TWO AND ONE HALF DAYS, MR. SIMON MET WITH THE PRESIDENT, THE MINISTERS OF FOREIGN RELATIONS, LABOR, AND EDUCATION, THE GOP'S SENIOR ADVISOR ON TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, THE ARCHBISHOP OF PANAMA, THE GOVERNOR AND LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF THE CANAL ZONE, THE CINC, THE DEPUTY CINC, OTHER HIGH OFFICIALS IN BOTH THE GOP AND THE CANAL ZONE, BESIDES RECEIVING A FULL BRIEFING FROM THE AMBASSADOR AND THE COUNTRY TEAM. SANDWICHED BETWEEN THESE APPOINTMENTS, HE MANAGED TO TAKE IN AN OVERFLIGHT OF THE CANAL, A VISIT TO CANAL ZONE SCHOOLS, AND A PRIVATE MEETING WITH A GROUP OF CANAL ZONE RESIDENTS.

2. THE INTEREST, ACUMEN AND APLOMB WITH WHICH HE CARRIED OFF THIS FULL A SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS, BRIEFINGS AND DISCUSSIONS, NOT JUST COURTEST CALLS, ARE A MEASURE OF HIS QUALITY AS WELL AS STAMINA. PANAMANIAN WITH WHOM HE TALKED HAVE LET US KNOW THAT THEY DEEPLY APPRECIATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIS SENSITIVITY TO THEIR VIEWPOINTS AND PROBLEMS--HIS ABILITY TO LISTEN TO THEM--AND, THE CANDOR AND DEPTH OF HIS RESPONSES TO THEIR QUERIES, AND THEIR DESIRES FOR HIS OPINIONS. THEY HAVE RATED HIM SIMPATICO, AN ACCOLADE

NOT OFTEN AWARDED ON 2-DAY NOTICE TO A "GRINGO".

3. MR. SIMON'S SUPPORT FOR A NEW, MODERN AND JUST TREATY BETWEEN THE U.S. AND PANAMA WAS WELCOME INDEED TO PANAMANIAN EARS FROM THE PRESIDENT ON DOWN; EVEN MORE SO HIS ESTIMATION THAT THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS WILL GIVE SUCH A TREATY A FAIR AND CONSIDERED HEARING IN APRIL-MAY OF 1977. MOREOVER, HIS UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE PANAMA ISSUE MEANS TO LATIN AMERICA, AND THE OPPORTUNITIES AN EQUITABLE, MATURE RESOLUTION TO IT OFFER THE UNITED STATES IN THIS HEMISPHERE WERE SEIZED UPON BY THE PANAMANIAN HE MET WITH APPRECIATION AND AGREEMENT.

4. HE PROPOSED THAT ARCHBISHOP MCGRATH SPEAK TO GROUPS OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATORS ON MAY 11 IN WASHINGTON. THE ARCHBISHOP AGREED, SHOULD SCHEDULE PERMIT IT.

5. IN LINE WITH HIS POSITION ON THE HOUSE EDUCATION AND LABOR COMMITTEE, HE DEMONSTRATED KNOWLEDGEABLE AND CONCERNED INTEREST IN PANAMA'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND PROGRAMS WITH MINISTER OF EDUCATION ROYO AND OTHER HIGH MINISTRY OFFICIALS. HE DISCUSSED CANAL ZONE EDUCATION WITH THE HEAD OF THE CANAL ZONE CIVIL AFFAIRS BUREAU, AS WELL AS THE GOVERNOR, AND WITH USSOUTHCOM EDUCATION OFFICIALS. IN ADDITION, HE VISITED AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN THE CANAL ZONE EARLY FRIDAY MORNING BEFORE LEAVING FOR THE AIRPORT.

6. HE CONVERSED ON LABOR AND LABOR PROBLEMS WITH LABOR MINISTER AHUMADA, AND WITH DEAN BUTCHER, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE AFL-CIO-AFFILIATED CTRP. IN ADDITION, HE DISCUSSED LABOR GUARANTEES FOR U.S. EMPLOYEES IN THE CANAL ZONE WITH SOME 20 ZONE RESIDENTS WEDNESDAY EVENING.

7. COMMENT: THE VISIT OF A MEMBER OF CONGRESS OF PAUL SIMON'S CALIBER IS A DOUBLE BOON FOR THE EMBASSY. IT PERMITS US TO EXPOSE HIM TO A FIRSTHAND VIEW OF PANAMA AND THE CANAL QUESTION AND TO A RANGE OF OPINIONS ON THEM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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WHICH CANNOT BE GOTTEN IN WASHINGTON, BUT IT ALSO ASSISTS THE EMBASSY IN DEMONSTRATING TO TOP-LEVEL PANAMANIAN THAT THEIR HISTORIC FRUSTRATIONS AND CURRENT ASPIRATIONS TO RESOLVE THEM MEET WITH COMPREHENSION ON THE PART OF ONE OF THE BODY OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO WILL HAVE TO APPROVE THAT RESOLUTION. FINALLY, THE CONGRSSMAN'S DISCUSSION OF THE U.S. POLITICAL ARENA, HIS DETAILING OF PRESSURES ON THE CONGRESS, AND HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLES' MOODS AND CARES ARE THE KIND OF INFORMATION WE WISH PANAMANIAN TO UNDERSTAND FULLY, AND THIS INFORMATION COULD NOT HAVE BEEN CONVEYED MORE FORCEFULLY, OR MORE TACTFULLY. END COMMENT.

JORDEN

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